

REPUBLICAN NEWS



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BANNED MARCH GOES AHEAD

The Armagh City march planned for this Sunday in support of POW status has been banned by Roy Mason, despite the fact that once the march wasn't 'filed' with the RUC it was illegal anyway! Many see Roy Mason's personal ban as petty spitefulness in the wake of the IRA's humiliating bomb blitz.

In a statement the Belfast Executive of Sinn Fein said that they along with the RAC would be going ahead with the march: "The message from the Republican people of the occupied six counties to Mason is, we will not be intimidated by your threats and we assure the people of Armagh they have the

full support of the Republican Movement. DETAILS: Sunday 26th November. Assemble Killylea Road... march to Market Street at 2.00 p.m. To follow original route of Armagh Civil Rights Demonstration November 1968 stopped by Paisley-led Loyalists and the RUC.

Fitt and Daly - Brit apologists

THE BOMB BLITZ launched by the IRA on Tuesday week was followed by further considerable activity (see page 2) across the Six-Counties, the latest of which was the crippling of a goods train in South Armagh, by an active-service-unit who planted bombs on board.

Already in Cookstown restrictions—lifted last year—have been reimposed on unattended vehicles. This is only the start of serious reversals for the British Government's "normalisation" policy.

The 'Northern Ireland Chamber of Trade' has demanded a meeting with Roy Mason to discuss the fresh wave of attacks. Mason tried to palm them off with the industry minister, as if to stress that nothing serious had developed, but they have been adamant and angry and are demanding an audience.

Last week Mason, crimson faced and shaken, left America with the minimum of publicity after his "Support Brit Imperialism" tour had flopped. American investors, whose first priority is profit (not employment), would hardly object to Mason exploiting their investment, by using propaganda to demoralise continued resistance. In fact, investment tightening the sense of "normality" and working against the struggle would improve the conditions for profit. Here, investment is clearly part of the tool of counter-insurgency. "Give them jobs, and We'll Keep Their Country". But this has been seriously dashed by last week's IRA operations, and American businessmen have shied off, convinced that not even the minimum conditions of stability exist.

FITT UNDER PRESSURE

It wasn't long before the Brit patronised leader of the collaborationist SDLP, Gerry Fitt, rushed into print to condemn the IRA, whose successes eclipse his treacherous policies which recent 'vocates'. Misrepresenting recent operations as being designed to create unemployment he said: "This is a region with the highest unemployment figures in Western Europe and is at the top of the league of social deprivation." Yet he refuses to analyse and admit why this is so. It is no accident of nature!

BISHOP DALY

Bishop Edward Daly of Derry also condemned the IRA and

of the struggle. Our people remember well the hope Bishop Daly gave Frank Stagg, exhausted by a long hunger-strike, by supporting his repatriation to Ireland. But after a few words from Merlyn Rees, and after a NIO newspaper's advertisement outlining the 'superior' British rationale, Bishop Daly not only withdrew his call for repatriation but supported the British Government's position. That somersault was one nail in Frank Stagg's coffin.

"He speaks about his concern for prison conditions, no doubt referring to the Blanket-men in the H-Blocks. Yet, not for the first time, he repugnantly attempts to bargain humanity for men on the inside conditional on an ending of the struggle on the outside. This is cynical opportunism not a concerned principle.

"We don't resist and fight without the support of those oppressed by the British occupation of our country, which, we must remind Bishop Daly, is still with us. Why not call on the British Government to end their war, and close down their prison camps in Ireland? Why not call on them to leave the Irish people in peace?" the statement ended.

We doubt very much if Bishop Daly will answer the last two questions; we doubt very much if he can.

GIANT STEPS FORWARD

Our enemies, the British Government and its supporters, for the purpose of justifying their own position, need to see us as never having substance, as not being a movement of fresh, revolutionary blood that can replace its losses from a reservoir of support. Ah well, the first ten years are over and far from collapsing we are on our feet. Yes, we will continue to struggle and our strong hearts will pump that blood harder through our veins... we will go on to take giant steps forward...



Brit spotter plane scans the area surrounding crippled goods train, for IRA booby trap bombs.

"Some sections of the media have given considerable coverage to Bishop Edward Daly's criticism of us. This is our reply.

"Certainly we can be criticised, and if we stand indicted before the people, not before those who rule us with their 15,000 foreign soldiers, their torture and repressive laws; nor before those who collaborate with our rulers. We take criticism when that criticism is in context; but let us get one point clear—it is not how we conduct the armed struggle which is under attack from Bishop Daly, but the armed struggle itself.

"Bishop Daly's judgement comes down on the side of the cause of violence—the British presence, and he holds no sway with us or our supporters who ultimately determine the course

IN SUPPLIED statements the Irish Republican Army claimed responsibility for the following operations:

Tues. 14th Nov.

Castlederg (Co. Tyrone)

Seven bombs exploded in business premises in Main Street, including one in a parked landrover. The bombs set fire to three buildings, causing considerable damage.

Thurs. 16th Nov.

Derry

A raging fire followed a bomb attack at Derry Garages in Strand Road, leaving the building badly damaged.

Belfast

Three bombs were left at Finlay's packing firm on the Ballygomartin Road. All the bombs exploded causing severe damage. (See IRA denial on Ulster Brewery bombing).

Strabane

A 400lb car bomb rocked the Brit checkpoint on the main Lifford-Strabane Road. The checkpoint was blown away and the Brits nearby living quarters were badly damaged, as was Brit morale.

Fri. 17th Nov

Belfast

The Northern Bank on Belfast's Crumlin Road was

damaged in an evening bomb attack. A nearby hoax bomb kept Brits and RUC men away from the location.

Almost 30 elaborate bomb hoaxes brought traffic in Belfast to a standstill from early morning.

Hundreds of Brits and

RUC men were tied down with the minimum of effort.

The day of disruption

started at 8.00 a.m. when a commandeered bus was left within yards of Belfast's City Hall on the main traffic thoroughfare. The

towns traffic grinded to a

halt, for several hours.

Two more buses were

commandeered and placed

on Boucher Road and on

Donegall Road, in the West

of the city.

Another commandeered

vehicle was left outside the

Kings Hall, Balmoral,

causing a build-up in traffic

on the Upper Lisburn Road,

Finaghy Road North and

Stockmans Lane.

A device planted on the

railway at Moira closed the

M1 motorway between the

Birches and Lurgan.

Hoax bombs disrupted

traffic on the Grosvenor

Road and Gresham Street

area. Trains were also

damaged during this attack.

Two bombs exploded in

Strabane Golf Club, shortly

after 5.00 a.m. The first

explosion started a fire; the

Brits and RUC narrowly

escaped injury when the

second bomb went off at

the rear of the building. ng.

In another Six-County

wide bombing offensive,

incendiary bombs were

planted in business premises

in the following towns:

Sat. 18th Nov.

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750 POWs NOW ON PROTEST

MASON'S H-BLOCKS are crumbling as resistance inside the prisons continues to grow. A fantastic spirit of solidarity unites the 750 POWs now on protest. These 750 Republican prisoners comprising 350 blanket men in H-Blocks 3, 4 and 5, 100 remand POWs in H6-Block, 250 remand POWs in Crumlin Road Gaol and 50 women prisoners in Armagh gaol. The determination of the prisoners to defy Mason's criminalisation plans, continues to prove unbreakable despite daily attempts by the screws to harass and brutalise them off their protest.

The extension of the protest to nearly 400 remand prisoners in Long Kesh, Crumlin Road and Armagh gaols has been an excellent boost for the status campaign. The remand prisoners' solidarity action is essentially a 'non-cooperation' with the screws' protest. For the 100 H6 Block men, over the last six months this has taken the

form of a 'no-wash, no-cleaning-out of cells' protest. As a result of the screws' recent vindictive action of smashing-up and removing cell furniture the terrible state of the H6 men's cells is now almost approaching that of their blanket comrades.

In Crumlin Road gaol the 250 remand POWs' 'non-cooperation' protest commenced at the 2nd of October with their refusal to shave, to get their hair cut, to make-up their beds or to clean out their cells. This action has since escalated to slopping-out under their cell doors whenever a screw beats a prisoner up and whenever a prisoner is put 'on the boards'.

In Armagh gaol, those women denied status have now been on protest for up to two years, this essentially has meant them refusing to do prison work. (They are allowed to wear their own clothes anyway). Since May, the women remand prisoners have taken solidarity action which has included refus-

ing to eat prison food at times. The importance of this solidarity action by all the Republican remand prisoners can not be underestimated. Not only does it show the strength of Republican resolve to defend POW status but in practical terms it prepares those hundreds of men interned-on-remand for their next step of defiance 'on the blanket'.

The importance of this whole

prison struggle and the barbaric depths to which the British are prepared to sink in order to break it, is well expressed by an H6-Block POW as follows:

"Perhaps the amount and the extremity of torture perpetrated, can be used to gauge just how much of a political reality and threat we blanket men are, and how important it is to the British government to break us in order to change us and kill us politically."

"Consider, two years of solitary confinement, naked, hosed down, scalped, sprayed with dangerous disinfectants, batoned, spread-eagled, and

deprivation of basic human necessities such as exercise and fresh air, medical treatment, the right to associate with other human beings and the deprivation of such things as T.V., radio, newspapers, books, educational materials and an endless list of other things.

"We have no beds; we have been starved, fed starvation diets, spent excessive periods in special punishment cells; we have been beaten senseless, hosed down, scalped, sprayed with dangerous disinfectants, batoned, spread-eagled, and

intimately searched, forcibly bathed, had urine and other matter thrown in our faces.

"We have been tortured to the brink of insanity. Why?

"Why batter a lad barely 18 years of age into unconsciousness, lock him in a box with a shower fitted inside and subject him to hot and cold water whilst scrubbing the skin from his back with a deck scrubber and beating him with batons? Surely it can not just be to tell him he's a criminal and you want to rehabilitate him!"



HIDDEN CRACKS IN THE H-BLOCKS

THE GRIM plight of the men incarcerated inside the H-Blocks continues to gain an ever-widening sympathetic audience nationally and internationally. The Brit myth of prisoners' 'self-infliction' is increasingly destroyed as people better understand the way the prison struggle has developed. That the 'blanket' protest was stepped up to the 'no-wash no-slop-out' protest to highlight daily harassment by the screws and to disarm the screws' claim of only sometimes allowing the men to go down the corridor to use the flush toilets as a 'privilege' for 'good behaviour'.

Only last week Dr. Deeny, a member of the Long Kesh prison board of visitors, interviewed on the BBC 'Spotlight' programme, condemned the prison regime's punitive response to the protest over a long period, as being 'ill-treatment'.

On the same programme Catholic Primate Dr. O'Fiaich repeated his previous condemnation and SDLP man Paddy Duffy, recognising the sentiments of his voters, backed his previous support for 'Emergency Status' by attacking the quality of 'justice' in the Diplock Courts. He claimed that three out of four of those convicted should not have been

CONTINUAL PROGRESS

Whilst there have been no recent obvious decisive gains in the fight for political status it is a fact that all the time there are progressive developments taking place which will ultimately lead to the retention of political status.

Slowly but surely effective pressure is building up nationally and internationally such that

withdrawal by the 'Daily Mirror' and by Liberal Party No. 2 John Pardoe have certainly eased the way in England for pointing out the 'political' nature of Irish prisoners.

EUROPE

In July 5,000 people marched in London shortly after the famous 'muck' throwing incident in the House of Commons — a fitting tribute to the inhabitants. Then at the time of Mason's recent blundering remarks about the 'no-prisoner' remand order, one back-bench Labour M.P. did raise the embarrassing question of the prisoners in the H-Blocks. Within recent months calls for Brit



The head of the huge August Coalisland to Dungannon March in defence of political status.

Status for POWs!

Protest meetings and demonstrations have been held in cities in France and Germany. In September a three-day conference of lawyers concerned with human rights took place in the Basque city of San Sebastian. One of the main items discussed was British repression in Ireland and the H-Block situation was explained in detail by a Dublin lawyer.

In Paris at the end of October, the National Union of French Students passed a motion of solidarity with the H-Block men and pledged to engage in a campaign of protests.

In Belgium the Brussels' committee of the Education Union (the Teachers Trade Union) have sent a telegram to the British government calling for political status while in Portugal 29 deputies of the Socialist Party have supported the call for political status; as have leaders of the Socialist Party in Lisbon.

AMERICA

Meanwhile the blanket men's Strasbourg cake is making steady progress with its rapid acceptance for consideration by the European Human Rights Commission. Britain will soon be in the dock again!

The Derry R.A.C. 'Focus on Repression' group have recently returned from America, where congressmen, especially those who depend on the Irish-American vote, have taken an increasing interest in Britain's continual violation of international codes of human rights here, particularly with respect to the treatment of prisoners.

Only last week influential congressman Mario Biaggi was in

(Continued on page 11)

TWINBROOK STUDENT INTERNED FOR SEVEN MONTHS ON REMAND

AFTER SPENDING seven months interned-on-remand in Crumlin Road gaol, 19-year-old Felim Hamill, a student from Twinbrook, Belfast was released on Tuesday, 14th November. The charge against him of killing an RUC man was withdrawn on the grounds of "insufficient evidence".

As he walked from the dock there was no recompense for Hamill for the length of time he had spent in gaol; he is just another statistic in Mason's game of statistics to prove he is "winning the war" against the I.R.A.

Over recent weeks, thirteen people from Nationalist areas have been released in this manner. Some spent twenty-one months in gaol.

When Hamill was charged, the media blew the trumpet of "success" at the R.U.C.'s efficiency in detecting those responsible for killing.

The t.v. and press had those charged already convicted by inferring that they had been recognised by Brits. Sensationalism took over as usual with little concern for the persons charged or their families.

Not unexpectedly the media interest in the case waned quickly. When Felim Hamill's relatives called a press conference to protest at the brutality inflicted on him during interrogation very few turned up.

It was revealed at the press conference that Hamill had been subjected to intense brutality. It was also revealed, two weeks before the hanging of Brian Maguire in Castlereagh, that Hamill had been choked to the point of unconsciousness and that he had a towel tightly wrapped around his face and neck.

Although the brutality was severe, Felim Hamill resisted all attempts to force him to sign a statement of complicity.

After being charged Hamill replied: "definitely not guilty".

When he first appeared in court his solicitor asked the R.U.C. to state the evidence. In typical fashion the R.U.C. man declined on the basis that "enquiries were continuing".

Hamill was remanded in custody to appear every week to be remanded-in-custody again, the whole process taking less than twenty-five seconds to perform.

Any attempt by Hamill's defence solicitor to raise the "substance of evidence" against

NEW COMHAIRLE CEANNTAIR OFFICER BOARD ELECTED, NORTH DUBLIN

The following people were elected to the new officer board of the north Dublin Comhairle Ceannair:

Chairman—Jack Murphy
Vice Chairman—Tony Kearns
Secretary—Sean Quinn
Treasurer—Paddy Morgan
Organiser—Vincent Devlin
P.R.O.—Joe Lundy
Educ. Officer—John Purcell

ULSTER EXECUTIVE AGM

THE ANNUAL General Meeting of An Comhairle Chúige Uladh (Ulster Executive) Sinn Féin, took place last Sunday. This year's meeting differed from those in the past, in that cumainn in Ulster had been asked to send along two delegates, in accordance with the resolution passed at the Ard Fheis.

The meeting was well attended and got off to a good start: the chairman at this stage was Richard Behal of the Ard Comhairle.

The first matter on the agenda was the roll call, and because areas were asked to identify themselves in block, delegates received a mental picture of how weak or how strong Sinn Féin was in the different areas of Ulster.

Next came reports from the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, P.R.O., Education Officer, and Organiser. Throughout these reports, one could detect from

his client at this weekly charade was futile.

Several months ago the D.P.P. opposed his bail application by claiming that Hamill had made certain verbal statements and that he was a "known terrorist" before his arrest.

Sitting in judgement on that occasion was McGonigal, notorious for his blind acceptance of "veiled accusations" made by the D.P.P. during bail applications. Inside five minutes Hamill was back in his cell, and there he remained until his recent release.

He is now left to pick up the pieces of his disrupted studies. He has no redress by way of compensation for being detained for seven months (like hundreds of others). He just happened to get caught up in the net of Brit repression.

husband Tom, outgoing Secretary, but now serving a prison sentence in Portlaoise over an H-Block protest.

Another example of how Sinn Féin had come under attack from state forces was to be seen in the Report of the outgoing P.R.O. Martha McClelland from Derry City who told the meeting of how all her files had been taken by the British army and RUC when they had raided the offices of Sinn Féin in Derry City.

The Reports from the treasurer and education officer were given in a concise manner and it was clear from what was said that they were looking for a better response from the cumainn in the year to follow.

The last report of the day was from the organiser who reminded the delegates of the work done by all Sinn Féin Cumainn and Comhairle Cheantair on the H-Block issue. Going on from this he called on cumainn to broaden out into wider political work, his report was followed by a lively debate.

The meeting passed onto the election of the coming officer board. First came the election

of the two delegates for the Ard Chomhairle; Martin McKenna of Belfast and Barney McFadden of Derry were elected. Following this, elections took place for the remaining positions of the Officer Board, among those elected were Billy Donnelly (Belfast) Chairman; Vera Bannon (Monaghan) Secretary; Kevin Agnew (South Derry) Treasurer; Mrs. McDermott (Belfast) P.R.O.; Mickey Darragh (Derry) Education Officer.

The meeting was then addressed by Christene Ni Elias head of Sinn Féin Education Department, who gave some useful but basic guidelines to the cumainn present on matters relating to the education department.

Finally the delegates were addressed by the President of Sinn Féin, Ruairí Ó Bráidigh.

He set the correct tone for all Sinn Féin meetings of this kind by his realistic approach to our problems while at the same time encouraging delegates to use the many talents Sinn Féin members had to further the aims, and broaden the base of, Sinn Féin.

NEW CUMANN FORMED

THERE WAS an encouraging attendance at a meeting to form a new cumann in Loughall, County Antrim.

The cumann, named after Roger Casement, pledged its determination to highlight the injustices of British rule throughout the occupied six counties, but particularly in their own

H-Block: Parents hear 'Stop it' * plea by Hume

SDLP deputy leader Mr. John Hume last night appealed to the parents of the men taking part in the H-block protest to act in the interest of their sons and "use their powers" to make them realise they are being exploited by the IRA.

Speaking on the BBC Northern Ireland "Spotlight" programme, Mr. Hume said continuing effects of the protest in what 340 men

HUME ON 'SPOTLIGHT'

THE COMMENTS made by John Hume during last week's B.B.C. "Spotlight" programme concerning the men in "H" Block are typical of what would be said by any "British" politician who actively supports the policies of the British war machine in occupied Ireland. At no time did he refer to the inhuman and degrading treatment inflicted on these political prisoners as a matter of policy by the Brits.

He appeared to support

unconditionally the official viewpoint expressed by the Colonial Northern Ireland Office that the protesters were being exploited by the I.R.A.; he blamed the present conditions on the men themselves.

Hume appeared to be more anxious to discredit the I.R.A. and make political capital from the plight of the "blanket men" than objectively considering the reasons for the men's plight.

He was reported to be suffering from an "unknown illness".

Attempts by his family to ascertain the nature of his illness have met with silence from the prison administration at Long Kesh.

In the wing where Gerry Ward was being held 32 men are suffering from dysentery.



BLANKETMAN'S
UNKNOWN
ILLNESS

GERRY WARD (pictured above) from Belfast's Short Strand area, who has been 'on the blanket' protest since February 1977, was removed from his cell in H4 A Wing, by screws on Friday, 17th November to the prison hospital.

It is reported that he is suffering from an "unknown illness". Attempts by his family to ascertain the nature of his illness have met with silence from the prison administration at Long Kesh.

In the wing where Gerry Ward was being held 32 men are suffering from dysentery.

AGM of Goss/Gaughan Sinn Féin Cumann Dundalk

AT THE annual general meeting of the Goss/Gaughan Sinn Féin Cumann, Dundalk the following officers were elected:

Chairman, Pat Duffy
Secretary, Olive Wykes
Treasurer, Tom Doyle

Educ. Officer, Kieran Stewart
Youth Officer, Gerard Davidson

After a discussion on local affairs, at which the cumann expressed the need for more local authority housing and the necessity to curb rising prices, a vote of thanks was passed for their local representative councillor Fra Browne, for his untiring work on behalf of the people of Dundalk.

A vote of solidarity was also passed with those on the blanket in H-Block, Long Kesh, in Crumlin Road, Armagh, Portlaoise and English jails, and especially for Stephen Nordine who is in Wormwood Scrubs prison, England.

A vote of sympathy was passed for the relatives of deceased Republicans in the area.

IRA STATEMENT 'Cut off men' warned

LAST SATURDAY in a supplied statement the 2nd Battalion of the Belfast Brigade of the Irish Republican Army, denied any involvement in the recent spate of robberies against the

Electricity and Gas workers. The statement also pointed out that those members of the above departments who carried out their work normally in the areas would not be harmed. But the

statement added:

"We do not include in this any person who attempts to cut off the gas or electricity supply to a home."

1968 MARCHING IN ARMAGH 1978

This coming Sunday, 26th November, Republicans from all over Ireland will assemble at Killeen Road, Armagh City to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the thwarted civil rights march held there on November 30th 1968.

Next Sundays demonstration, organised by Armagh R.A.C. and supported by the Republican Movement will retrace the original marchers route. It will be the third commemorative mass march following the Coalisland to Dungannon March in August and the Derry City march in October.

Like both previous marches, the demands are political status for P.O.W.'s, an end to torture, and Brits out.

Ten years ago the R.U.C. collaborated with the Paisleyite Loyalists and stopped the marchers leaving the Nationalist ghetto in Armagh, called the Shambles.

This time around Paisley and his democratic Unionists cohorts will again attempt to prevent the demonstration reaching its destination.

The sectarian belief that nationalists shouldn't be allowed to march out of the ghettos is as prevalent today as it was ten years ago.

Armagh City councils response to the march is indicative of the attitude which has propped up their orange statelet since its inception.



Angry Civil Rights marchers at the corner of Ogle Street, after their march was stopped by the RUC and Paisleyites.

Armagh City, 30th November 1968

LOYALISTS AND RUC BLOCK CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH

TEN YEARS ago Loyalists road blocking exercises in Dungannon on August 18th and Derry on October 5th provided the hated R.U.C. with the excuse to baton the civil rights marchers off the streets.

Undaunted the Civil Rights Association decided Armagh city should be the venue for the next march on November 30th. As before they 'filed' for the march and the march was not officially banned, causing much Loyalist outrage.

Paisley and supporters arrived themselves were infuriated at in Armagh city at 2 a.m. having their march sabotaged once again. Attempts by the marchers to push back the RUC barricades resulted in inspiring politicians like Austin Currie turning on them, and telling them to withdraw. But Currie and his cohorts were shouted down and on several occasions the angry marchers broke through the stewards line and attacked the hated RUC with bricks and bottles.

By 11 a.m. that morning Paisley's mob had swelled to almost 1,000. Amongst whom friendly RUC men mingled. To ensure that there was no chance of the civil rights marchers getting anywhere near Armagh city centre the RUC ringed it with steel barricades.

At 2.50 p.m. the civil rights parade moved off from Naval Street with about 5,000 supporters. When the marchers got to the junction of Ogle Street and Thomas Street the RUC blocked their path. Fifty yards behind the RUC barricade Paisley's banner waving supporters chanted their furious songs of hatred.

The civil rights marchers

spurred' of the Civil Rights Association who were out to destroy 'Ulster' Protestantism.

During Paisley's address general news reporters were warned to stop filming the meeting by cudgel carrying thugs, or their cameras would be smashed.

The civil rights marchers were addressed by Currie who bemoaned the behaviour of the combined force of RUC and Loyalists blocking their route. But he went on in his usual cowardly manner to appeal for 'no violence' in the face of aggression. He told the marchers to go home quietly.

Seeing the marchers disperse following Curries appeal the Paisleyites knew they had once again been victorious. They set off on a triumphant procession to the Mall. En route they attacked members of the press and T.V., smashing their cameras and beating them up. ITN reporter Ken Taylor was injured in the head and had to have six stitches inserted in a wound.

Later that night drunk with victory the Loyalists went on the rampage in Cathedral Street attacking nationalist residents with bricks and bottles, while the RUC stood idly by.

The producer and reporter of the programme were beaten to the ground and kicked.

Meanwhile Paisley and his fanatical 'Mad Major' Bunting was ranting away to his belligerent supporters in Market Square about the papal 'con-



A section of the 5,000 strong Civil Rights march makes its way along Ogle Street in Armagh, 30th November, 1968.

Furore in council chamber - 1978

ARMAGH RELATIVES Action Committee decision to march this coming Sunday, has caused a furore inside the city's council chambers.

Since the committee announced their plans almost weekly the chambers have echoed with the sectarian sentiments of Messers. Hutchinson and Lyttle, both Paisleyite DUP members.

At the council meeting three weeks ago the councilors in block passed two resolutions proposed by Hutchinson (Vice Chairman of the Council) demanding the march be banned and that a four-man delegation meet R.U.C. Chief Newman to discuss how best to stop the march.

The call to have the march banned was followed by an outburst of venomous hatred from Lyttle who rambled on about Republicans being allowed to flaunt "foreign" tri-colour flags in Derry's Protestant Waterside and cause trouble, and about their coming to Armagh to do the same.

He went on to criticise the lack of firmness by the Brits/RUC at letting these marches go ahead and stated: "It would be better if they were up in apache territory catching the bandits".

Mallon of the crawling SDLP, spoke of the "potential acrimony" Hutchinson's proposal would cause in the chamber. Although he agreed with Hutchinson that no march should take place; the SDLP caught in the web of the Nationalist people's anger at the barbous manner Republican P.O.W.'s are being held in the 'H' Blocks, abstained from voting.

The attitude of Armagh's political hacks to the march is a sure sign that the RAC's decision is correct. Commenting on the concerted attack by the councillors the local RAC said:

"Contrary to what the Armagh councillors would have the public believe, the purpose of this march is not to cause trouble but to highlight the suffering of the men in H Block and the women in Armagh Gaol in their struggle to have political status restored.



Paisley in Armagh City, November 30th, 1968.

THE "LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC RESPONSE" TO 'TERRORISM'

READING THIS book was like wading through sludge; not so much that it was "gripping" (the fly-leaf's description), but that it took me three frustrating weeks to get through, with interest often lapsing. And the problem with this review — if I am to make it interesting — is that I have to squeeze out the essence of a book which is a spiritless bore, and thus give the reader a false impression of its worth. That being the criteria read on!

Forty-seven-year old Bowyer Bell whose book was written under the auspices of the Institute of War and Peace Studies (Columbia University) says that:

"Nowhere in the growing literature on terrorism, however, does there exist a rigorous, crossnational analysis of what the response of the threatened has been ... Clearly, the time has come for a general book on the liberal, democratic response to terrorism..."

With that in mind I read on to discover no tangible thread, suspect he's riding a number of horses at the one time, and could not establish (in three weeks!) the Messiah's gospel until 278 pages later the book concludes with incredibly Monty Python-like advice:—

"Terror in its manifold forms will remain with us. Make the best of a troubled world. Do not open bulky packages mailed from an unfamiliar address in Belfast. Avoid riding with controversial diplomats, applying for executive positions in troubled zones, or flying in planes that accept unfiltered passengers in the Rome or Athens terminals. Do not vacation in Uganda or lunch with Italian judges."

INTERNATIONAL

Attempts to define "terrorism" for legal purposes and establish international legislation stretch back over a century, though the first real step came at a Congress on Penal Law in Brussels in 1926. Later the French petitioned the League of Nations, then in 1976 came the Council of Europe Pack on Anti-Terrorism (which the Free State Government has not signed). The latter, of course, included a blanket-ban on activities such as the use of bombs or

BOOK REVIEW BY PETER ARNLIS

portrayed as cynical nihilists. "What matter the victims, provided the gesture is beautiful."

He maintains that "the quality of the coverage is quite immaterial to the terrorists' purpose: only the intensity and quantity of coverage matter." But this is nonsense to genuine revolutionaries whose explanation of their actions is essential to them and the people. Simple coverage of an operation without the communiqué is of no real use (unless of course everybody understands the action anyway) and can be counterproductive and damaging if it simply presents the freedom fighter as a mad bomber or as an elitist, without any rationale.

'RAPE OF MEDIA'

Originally I thought that this book was a political counter-insurgency complement to Kitson's military methods. In A TIME OF TERROR 'People's War' isn't the phenomena being dealt with, rather it is an episodic account of hijackings, hostage-taking and more hijacking, the real elitist aspects of a modern Trotsky's "Against Individual Terrorism". (That last statement, of course, does not preclude those tactics being legitimately used against a wider background of struggle).

However, I think any definition of "terrorism" must include what Libya's Abu Zoid Durdz said:—

"To station American forces overseas is terrorism. To monopolize the wealth of countries is terrorism. To dominate the outlets of seas and oceans is terrorism. To provide aging regimes with sophisticated weapons to oppress the people is terrorism. To use wheat and gold as political toys when the world is starving is terrorism."

Bell is also critical of those flourishing academic experts on "Terrorism" who are on the make. He complains about the dearth of actual concrete research into terrorism, "few specialists have ever seen a terrorist, even at the end of a gun, and even fewer have prison or in retirement."



A helicopter using "motesun" searchlight to show up what is going on the ground.

However, Kitson and the "Union Jack School" are in a category of their own.

On the whole "terrorists" bear the major responsibility for the violence, says Bell. For good measure "the alphabet of death" including the PFLP, FLQ and the IRA, also includes the Red Brigades, South Moluccans and right-wing Croatians, an amorphous crew of "psychopaths and criminals" out to whom it is the revolutionary that presents the real threat".

They go on to include: fanatics more easily

unresolved nationalities problem need not fear domestic revolution from terrorism... Where revolutionary violence can recruit beyond a single narrow generation and achieve the toleration of the many, this is an indication that societal efficiency is eroding or that inchoate nationalism exists."

When you have digested that one you'll appreciate my plight! On examination it covers Britain's occupation of the north).

Where this is the case, says Bell, it must be

J. BOWYER
BELL

A Time of Terror

How Democratic Societies Respond to Revolutionary Violence

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216, but that
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"Belfast and
Derry became
war zones"!!!
War zones
bedamned, I'm
off to my
billet!

BY MARCELLA, H5 BLOCK

The window of my mind

WHEN ONE spends each day naked and crouched in the corner of a cell resembling a pigsty, staring at such eye sores as piles of putrifying rubbish, infested with maggots and flies, a disease ridden chamber pot or a blank disgusting scarred wall, it is to the rescue of ones sanity to be able to rise and gaze out of a window at the world.

My cell window, fortified by thick concrete slabs which serve as bars, affords me with a view of nothingness, unless a barbed wire jungle and rows of blank faceless tin timbers offer an artistic appreciation unknown to me. It's what passes by, lingers or materialises in front of my humble little window that saves me, that can dampen depression, allow me to contemplate, serve as an enjoyable distraction from my surroundings and provide me with a once unknown pleasure.

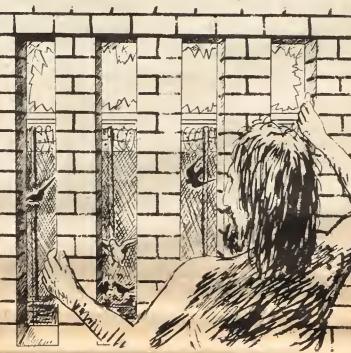
A DREARY AFTERNOON

On a dreary, dull, wet morale-attacking November afternoon when ones stomach is empty and when the monotony begins to depress and demoralise, it is soothing in many respects to spend a half an hour with ones head pressed against the concrete slabs gazing in wonder and taking in the antics of a dozen or so young starlings bickering over a few stale crusts of bread, circling, swooping, sizing up and daring an extra nibble, continually on their guard, all their tiny nerves on edge, feuding amongst themselves, the greedy one continually trying to dominate and always wanting the whole haul to himself, fighting with his comrades whilst the sparrow sneaks in to nibble at the spoils.

As I said earlier, this book is about the "liberal, democratic response" to terrorism. But we Irish are victims of a so-called "liberal democratic response" — imperialist terrorism. It is terrorism because it is sanctioned by individuals — the British ruling class — and carried out by other individuals — their Army. It is terrorism because their methods are brute force, fear and their terrifying law apparatus which "legitimises" their presence.

One miscellaneous point in conclusion: George Caskey and the other 1984 Castlereagh RUC observers of Republican words and phrases, must resume their friendship with their Chief "Justice" Robert Lowry after their recent quarrel over the case of Gerry Adams. For Io and behold what does it say on Page 216, but that in the '70's "Belfast and Derry became war zones"!!! War zones bedamned, I'm off to my billet!

On many a summer's evening and cold winter's night I stood with only my old shabby blanket wrapped tightly around me, my breath pouring out into the blackness in ghost like clouds, just dreaming.



Many a day in the eternal hours that had no end, I stood watching the birds and listening to the lark, trying to discover its whereabouts in that stagnant blue ocean above me that represents the outside world and I longed for the liberty of the lark!

I suppose to many, a few birds, the sound of a lark, a blue sky or full moon are there, but unnoticed most of the time, but to me they mean existence, peacefulness, comfort, entertainment, something to view, to help forget the tortures, brutalities, indignities and evils that surround and attack my everyday life.

SHEETS OF STEEL

Today the screws began blocking up all the windows with sheets of steel, to me this represents and signifies the further torture of the tortured, blocking out the very essence of life — nature! A few words I once read came echoing back to me today — "No-one can take away from a person his or her ability to contemplate. Throw them into prison, give them hard labour, unimaginative work to do, but you can never take from them the ability to find the poetry and music in life" — and I also realised that they, here, my torturers, have long ago started and still endeavour to block up the window of my mind.

**POLITICAL STATUS
IS A RIGHT
- NOT A PRIVILEGE**

POST BAG

All letters should be addressed to
the Editor at 170A Falls Road, Belfast.

CIVIL RIGHTS?

Dear Editor,

I wish to comment on Fred Heatley's letter, published last week, about the NICRA seminar held in Belfast last month. Although written in an inoffensive style as I read on the letter increasingly made my blood boil.

Will Fred Heatley and others who hold to the NICRA/Stick line on 'civil rights' never learn?

What hope can there ever be of 'reforming' this sectarian British colonial outpost?

It is not just some abstract political theory, but it is our bloody experience of the last ten years at the hands of first of all the Loyalists, and then the Brits and the Loyalists which dictates the impossibility of such reform.

It is the Brit-system of partition which props up the protestant ascendancy and thus keeps the orange fires of hatred and privilege burning high. Only after the destruction of the Brit-elected monuments to sectarianism, the border, will it be possible to achieve 'civil rights' not only in the occupied six counties but also in the rest of the country.

As Fred Heatley correctly claims, sectarianism obviously stems from much earlier times than partition; but the decisive point is that partition re-enforces this sectarianism by giving it official British state backing and by making it, sectarianism, 'respectable' under the guise of 'democracy' — the false 'democracy' of the biggest gerry-mander of them all — the hijacking of a carefully selected portion of this country, the six north-eastern counties.

So the question of partition, far from being "superfluous" as Fred Heatley claims, is in fact absolutely central to the whole problem of 'discrimination' and 'civil rights'. To claim that 'civil rights' can be won within the confines of partition is to tread the dangerous sticky road towards becoming an ally of those British propagandists who justify their presence as a 'peace-keeping force', necessary until sectarianism is eroded and 'normality' returns.

In criticising the Republican Movement for organising H-Block protests to commemorate 1968 civil rights marches, Fred Heatley claims that "any civil rights body to be truly effective cannot allow itself to be used as a vehicle for party-political propaganda." Yet NICRA precisely is, and was, used by the sticks and communists as a vehicle to openly promote their reformist politics.

Today the massive H-Block protests are precisely in line with, and the outcome of, the marches of a decade ago. The civil rights struggle has logically developed into a national liberation struggle which means marching to defend POW status, against RUC torture and for 'Brits Out'.

The Republican Movement correctly makes no apology for bringing 'politics' on to H-Block platforms. Indeed the very

campaign being waged by the blanket-men themselves is a political campaign for political status. Even so, given Britain's inhuman and degrading treatment of these defenceless prisoners, there is no contradiction in Republicans expecting and welcoming support from principled humanitarians who may not themselves be concerned with the political principles at stake.

It is on the question of 'violence' that Fred Heatley really goes haywire. He claims that "The gains of the early civil rights movement have been negated by violence". To fit in with his whole argument he obviously means Republican 'violence' (The Stick analysis). But such an analysis turns reality upside down.

He correctly lists concessions that have been made to the Nationalist population in housing, jobs and voting rights, but fails to grasp that they have been won precisely because of Republican militancy (including armed struggle) not despite them. (Would the £50 million De Lorean plant have been sited in West Belfast if the IRA had been defeated?) Through such steps the Brits have attempted to undercut the revolutionary threat posed by Republicanism.

Fred Heatley makes a futile attempt to ignore the national question. He writes about 'civil rights' and repression as though British imperialism and sectarian privilege do not exist; He writes about 'Northern Ireland' as though it is a normal Western European liberal democratic state with a few deviations (e.g. 'special powers' legislation) which could be eradicated by peaceful protest but for the provocative actions of a few misguided people (the I.R.A.) who engage in 'violence'.

He states that available houses and jobs have not been taken up because "folks are afraid, with good reason, to cross the religious/political divide." But surely it is the fear of British and Orange violence which restricts those in need? Does anyone think there are vacant houses and jobs within nationalities areas which deprived Loyalists are restricted from taking?

The armed might of British imperialism and the armed threat of Orange reaction cannot be wished away. Irish history, international history (of other colonial struggles), and political theory all dictate one conclusion: 'violent' republicanism is an absolute necessity to win meaningful civil rights, and these 'civil rights' will only be guaranteed in a Socialist Ireland.

Sean McCartney
Belfast.

Civil Rights - Damn yours concessions!

A Chara,

I would like to take issue with the letter from Fred Heatley. Mr. Heatley states that discrimination and denial of civil rights existed before partition and portrays the view that Partition is a red herring. Does Mr. Heatley not agree that it was the British occupation of Ireland that first promoted the sectarian divide in our community and that Partition has perpetuated this divide?

OK. Sectarianism existed before Partition but does that negate the fact that the British still occupy Ireland and that the Irish people do have the right for self-determination? Does Mr. Heatley accept the right of the British government to rule in Ireland? Does he deny the Irish people the right to self-determination?

I can see his point of view.

We can end the struggle against British Imperialism. We can have civil rights and an end to discrimination (in law anyway). All we have to do is to accept that the Brits have the right to govern us and that we don't have the right to self-determination. We can then demand that Britain modifies its oppression by implementing reforms for the benefit of the natives.

We are asked to forget our nations oppression and to press for social and democratic reforms. If we were to do this we would be accepting the right of Britain to control our lives and the history of Ireland, as Mr. Heatley knows, shows incontrovertibly that Irishmen and

women will never accept this. No matter how much this oppression is modified, it is still oppression and will be opposed.

What form this opposition should take has been shown by the events of the past ten years and by the historical evidence from any country that has achieved freedom from imperialism.

Even the moderate demands of the early Civil Rights Association (C.R.A.) were met by violence and no matter what Heatley thinks, it was the violence of the I.R.A. which obtained those concessions he claims were won by the civil rights campaign.

If there hadn't been a violent reaction to the suppression of the C.R.A. demands how many of these concessions would have been given? Each concession was given to try to bribe the Irish people to give up their struggle for their most basic right—that of self-determination.

The Irish people have seen at first hand that force of arms is suppressing their legitimate aspirations. Only by force can stability be maintained in Ireland and only by force of arms will the Irish people achieve their legitimate aspirations.

After nine years the British Army and its cohorts, using bribery, repression, torture and murder, have failed to quell the spirit of rebellion. Yet Mr. Heatley there is still a heck of a long road to travel before full equality and we are hardly likely to let the promise of social and economic reforms from our oppressor to deflect us from our goal.

"Damn your concessions, we want our country".

PaulRua.

Luton paper sellers

A Chara,

Whilst Luton Sinn Fein has every reason to be grateful for the continuing support from the people of Luton, we feel that the following incident should be reported.

Over the past eight years, Republican News has been sold in pubs, clubs and at public meetings in the area. However, on Friday night 3rd November, the landlord of the King's Arms Chapel Street Luton, was guilty of intimidating a seller of Republican News.

We would point out that none of the patrons of the King's Arms, objected to the paper being sold, they have been regular readers for a number of years.

It would appear that this landlord has set himself up as Luton's "Roy Mason" (there is a remarkable physical similarity) in the suppression of Republican News. We feel therefore that people in Luton should be made aware of the facts. There are many pubs in the area where people are made welcome and there is no restriction on the purchase of literature.

P.R.O., Luton Sinn Fein Cumann, England

International campaign against repression

Dear Sir

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions, at its annual conference held in Galway in July, passed a resolution calling for a public inquiry into the death of Brian Maguire and the matters contained in the Amnesty report. The response from the British government has been negative. Neither has there been any progress towards the restoration of political status in Long Kesh. Indeed, the situation has deteriorated with the British Army being given carte blanche to fire first and ask questions later. This has resulted in the death of a number of civilians.

Paddy Kelly, a Belfast docker, and Joe Edwards, an NEC member of the Trade Union Campaign Against Repression, have been served with exclusion orders from Britain under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. In the South, the whole O'Briain Committee operation has been discredited, the free state government having dropped even the internal Garda inquiry into the activities of the 'heavy gang'.

But if Ireland is the most politically repressed country in Europe, it is by no means the only one. The authorities, East and West, are increasingly resorting to repression against working people, defending democratic rights and living standards, and nations struggling for their freedom. The arrest and jailing of anyone in Spain who dares to question the monarchy and the unitary Castilian state is but one example.

Recently we learned that the Irish section of Amnesty International has taken up the case of Kilebanov, the miner, confined to a mental hospital for attempting to set up an independent trade union in the USSR and of their request to the trade union movement to seek his release.

We learned also of the serious escalation of repression in Czechoslovakia, exemplified in the arrest and ill-treatment of Jaroslav Sabata, official spokesperson for the Charter 77 movement.

Clearly, international action against repression is required. This was the intent of an inter-

national meeting held in Paris from August 4th to 6th this year. An appeal from leading members of the Irish labour and trade union movement for an international campaign against repression in Ireland was discussed and approved. The meeting, attended by members of European socialist parties, opponents of national oppression from Ireland, Euzkadi and Catalonia and socialist dissidents from Eastern Europe, issued a call for support for a general campaign in support of the victims of repression, East and West. Irish sponsors of this appeal now include (in their personal capacities): Michael Mullen, General Secretary, ITGWU, Paddy Mooney, member of the national executive of the ITGWU, Phil Flynn, Deputy General Secretary, LGPSU, Kevin McConnell, Joint General Secretary, NEETU, Jim Quinn, Trustee, WUI, Bernadette McAliskey, Conn O'Leirigh, Maisie McConnell and Frank Butler, officers of the Dublin Regional Council of the Labour Party.

The Irish committee of the international campaign is seeking signatories to the appeal and donations.

— Paddy Healy,
Irish Secretary, International Campaign Against Repression, Dublin.

EDITOR'S NOTE: In Spain trade unions have been appealing against repression. In Belgium, three Flemish Socialist Party Parliamentary Deputies have signed it, as have 58 delegates of the Flemish Socialist Youth Organisation.

AN ATTEMPT to burn the pavilion and social centre of Crossmaglen Rangers GAA club was made on Wednesday 15th November, hours before a press conference arranged by the club to protest against the continuing presence of the British Army on club property.

Press reporters arriving for the conference found the interior of the social centre — which had been renovated at a cost of £3,000 — charred and blackened by smoke.

The Brits and RUC were on-the-spot in force and left reporters in no doubt about the outcome should any of them try to photograph the Brit/RUC barracks. One film crew had their film confiscated because their camera was angled in the direction of the Brit Fort. Later, as GAA officials were

CROSSMAGLEN GAELIC CLUB BURNED

examining the muddy car-park area, a Brit vehicle swerved towards the party, soaking GAA Director General Mr Sean O Siadhain's trousers with mud and water.

The Brit regiment occupying Crossmaglen is the 42nd Marine Commandos; who are notorious for their brutality and intimidation whenever they are sent to this country.

Crossmaglen Rangers Football Club have been battling to have the Brits removed since they occupied their premises during internment in 1971. To

date their actions have had little impact.

The Brits now occupy approximately two acres of the club's land; and they are in the process of building a five metre high wall around the land they confiscated during 1974. Already the length of the pitch has been reduced by 12 yards. If the Brits get away with building the wall, it is likely the length of the pitch will be further reduced by another ten yards.

At the press conference, Con Murphy, President of the GAA



Royal Marine Commandos

billet less than 50 yards away.

Commenting on the attempt to burn down the club by breaking into it close to the Brit's billet, a local GAA official said: "Only a fool or a madman or a soldier, who knew he was safe would have come through that window."

Passing the time of day — Brit style!

AS ANYBODY living in a nationalist area of the six occupied counties knows only too well it is common practice of the British army to harass people in the streets by asking them numerous personal details such as their date of birth. This is despite the fact that under the "Emergency Provisions Act" a "suspect" is required to give nothing further than their name, address and where they are going to and coming from.

As we reported in last week's "Republican News" in Belfast's Twinbrook Estate the Brits/RUC have been going round with forms recording people's name, address, employer, car details, telephone number, religion and date of birth. Whilst in Derry City the Brits have taken to asking such questions to so great an extent, that last week local



Brit 'P' checking youngsters in Derry.

so.

"Sometimes I receive complaints from the public that soldiers have been asking these questions, but I have to explain to them that they are merely trying to pass the time of day."

"We knew that on a few occasions some soldiers have asked these questions but it is only to make conversation — they realise they can in no way demand trying."

"People don't have to answer questions about their date of birth or occupation, and it is definitely not true that they are being brought in for further questioning if they refuse to do

AROUND THE ADVICE CENTRES IN DERRY CITY

Watercuts, Playgrounds and Footpaths

The work of the Sinn Féin Advice Centres in Derry City, and elsewhere, is extremely varied.

During the recent water dispute the water in Creggan estate, Derry City was abruptly turned off one Saturday afternoon.

The Sinn Féin Advice Centre immediately went into action. Staff there contacted the Water Service to determine when supplies would be restored. Not only was the Water Service unable to guarantee a rapid restoration of normal supplies, but due to the dispute, was unable even to send water workers out to warn the 13,000 residents of Creggan of the dangers of burst boilers if they kept fires going as usual. Staff at the Centre in Creggan took the initiative to spray the area with a loud-hailer alerting residents to the danger.

Over the past few weeks, the staff at the Shantallow Sinn Féin Advice Centre turned their attention to problems with the playgrounds at Fern Park and Carnhill. One aspect of the problem is the size of the present playgrounds. Sinn Féin proposes that instead of one large playground serving an entire estate, that several smaller playgrounds be built, designed to attract different age groups, and under parental supervision.

At present there is one playground serving the whole Fergleen and Moss Park area — containing between 300 and 400 houses, most of which contain families with young children.

A different kind of problem is felt by residents in the Glencaw/Cashelhill Park area. Here, a new estate is lacking footpaths to and from it. The only way residents have of getting to or from a major shopping complex at Stewarts is by walking a roundabout route on the road. Residents have beaten beaten down dirt tracks by constant use, but in this wet weather the paths become a slippery mud track. Many residents in this area are O.A.P.s and are virtual prisoners on the estate during the wet weather.

St. James' 'smashed flags' PROTEST

RESIDENTS FROM St. James' and Rodney Parade areas last week joined forces with the local Robert Emmet/Francis Liggat Sinn Féin Cumann to highlight growing concern at the absence of proper street lighting and dangerous broken footpaths — which have caused several accidents.

For almost two years the local people have been complaining to the Department of Environment who have so far completely ignored them. The paving stones are believed to have been smashed by the Brits.

Some footpaths are so hazardous that one mother of three tripped outside her door, fractured her wrist, bruised some ribs and sprained her ankle. One protestor commented: "Local people don't want the tarmac footpaths because they

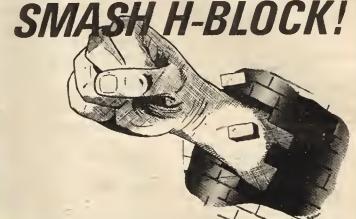


Women from St. James' and Rodney Parade area circulating a petition calling for adequate paving and street lighting.

are too slippery in wet weather; instead, we want properly laid flagstones and adequate street lighting."

A petition calling for their demands was circulated in the area by the Emmet/Liggat Cumann and met with a great response.

Support the PoWs



IRISH CIVIL WAR 1922 — 1923

PART V - THE AFTERMATH

ALTHOUGH THE Irish civil war came to its official end in May 1923, there was not much difference between war and peace for Republicans who were still being arrested, imprisoned and even murdered in the months to come.

The ten months of war had been worse than the three years of war against the British in terms of lives lost, destruction of property including great houses and valuable estates, apparatus of state repression, savage reprisals, damage to the economy £30,000,000 was a most conservative estimate: a disastrous sum by the money values of the time for the already impoverished 26 counties.

The war emphasised the national division between those Irish who instinctively turn towards Britain and those who instinctively do not. Of the two major parties today, one Fine Gael is the same as the party of Cosgrave and Mulcahy in the civil war, and the other is Fianna Fail.

Former feuds and enmities sometimes surface. For every pious call to forget the past and break with old civil war loyalties, there will be episodes like the outbursts of anger amongst Cork city councillors over the name of Michael Collins. While "Remember the 77 executions!" was for long a rallying call.

The war had left the country in poor shape, but at last the Free State could concentrate on making its new Ireland — much in the same mould as the old one, with the British connection as firmly cemented as ever James Connolly warned it would be if the green flag was merely hoisted above Dublin Castle without setting about the organisation of the Socialist Republic. So the King's Lord Lieutenant in Dublin became the King's Governor-General.

Amongst those who did not attend top-hatted garden parties at Viceregal Lodge were the 18,000 prisoners crammed into jails and camps. And since Kevin O'Higgins for Home Affairs had promised caustically that "This is not going to be a draw, with a replay in the autumn", they were going to stay there.

During the summer further measures were put through parliament; the Public Safety (Emergency Powers) (No. 2) Act 1923, by which Richard Mulcahy as Minister for Defence signed individual order for the detention of men and women already, interned without trial.

THE ELECTION

With the country outwardly pacified, the Government judged it a good time to call a general election to confirm themselves in office, forming their own party of the Cumann na nGaedheal (old name for Fine Gael) but, as they would do again, they misjudged the mood of the people. They also made the mistake of allowing the political republicans to take part under the old banner of Sinn Fein, and the voters had not forgotten the attractions of that name.

Despite full press support and much backing from the earlier pro-treaty elements, and despite continual harassment of their Sinn Fein opponents whose organisation was disrupted by violence and most of whose candidates were interned or on the run so that women and boys had to play the major part in electioneering, the result of the general election came as an unpleasant shock for the government. They had won the largest number of seats, 63, but Sinn Fein had won 44 —

more than twice their best hopes — and this greatly boosted republican morale, after all the misfortune since the treaty.

There had been signs during the campaign that the government was not having it all its own way. Reports told of how President Cosgrave raged over his reception in what was supposed to be a friendly area: unable to hire the local bands, unwelcome guest at a hurling match, and then finding a memorial card for Liam Mellows and Erskine Childers under his plate at an official dinner; and of how in County Kerry black-shawled mothers knelt in the streets and cursed him for the murder of their sons.

It appeared that sufficient voters had drawn on a reservoir of sympathy for the ill-used republicans, while also wanting to record their resentment at the harsh measures and visible arrogance of the Cosgrave government. The remaining seats were shared between Labour, Farmers and Independents.

As a result, in terms of elected TDs, the Government was left in a minority position with only 63 seats out of a total of 153, but this was transformed into a clear majority by the simple expedient of banning the Sinn Fein members when they still refused to take the Oath of Allegiance, due to the British King, and thereby accept the treaty. Moreover, 18 of Sinn Fein TDs were prisoners.

In the enduring Irish tradition they had been elected while in jail, but would not be released to take their seats. One of the eighteen was Eamon de Valera who had come out of hiding to address a public meeting in Ennis, Co. Clare, his

old constituency. Free State troops fired at the platform, wounding some persons, and de Valera had been arrested.

So when the new parliament assembled, all Sinn Fein TDs were absent and the Cosgrave party remained firmly in power. "Those who talk about democracy cannot say, I think, that democracy in the 1923 election got very much of a chance," de Valera remarked bitterly from his cell.

THE PRISONERS

While for many of the Republican activists the summer and autumn of 1923 meant little quiet, for the thousands of prisoners it was a desperate time. And because one legacy of the Irish civil war for all future Dublin governments would be numbers of IRA prisoners, this subject requires some attention when studying the implications of that war.

Already the prisoners in Maryborough (now called Portlaoise) had tried to burn down their prison. After the election which one way or another had kept the Cosgrave government in power, the prisoners soon found that their situation went from bad to worse. Until then all



THE IRISH CIVIL WAR

Several months ago the West London branch of the United Troops' Own Movement published an unusual and interesting pamphlet "The Irish Civil War 1922 — 1923" by Francis Blake.

"Republican News" has shortened the pamphlet by roughly half and we are reprinting it in five parts over five weeks. This series provides not just an historical account of great interest to Republicans but contains lessons for us today.

This account shows well the futility of compromise and in exposing the bloody foundations of the Free State, goes some way towards explaining the attitudes of successive Free State governments towards the Republican Movement.



Women demonstrating against conditions of IRA prisoners and for release of the hunger-strikers in Mountjoy jail in October 1923. Maud Gonne McBride carries a banner.

joy in which hundreds took the prisoners resort to a mass hunger strike in order to obtain their unconditional release. The strike for political status or better treatment was thought an insufficient cause since the war had been over for many months.

MASS HUNGER STRIKE

On October 13, their OC Mountjoy smuggled out a manifesto that announced the near-unanimous decision: "In face of all these facts the prisoners now feel that there is but one alternative left to them — the hunger strike, the ultimate weapon of passive resistance, and that they have decided to adopt..."

Each of us to himself and to his comrades solemnly pledge himself to abstain from food until he is unconditionally released. In taking this grave decision we, as citizens of Ireland know that lovers of liberty th

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

world over will understand and respect our motives."

The Government refused to give way to any such demands so the hunger strike followed a familiar course. The newspapers gave little or no coverage until the final stages; cabinet ministers stood firm against what they condemned as criminals' blackmail; the public conscience was generally unmoved, although members of individuals did show deep concern, and meantime the prisoners suffered. No one was ordered to go on hunger strike or to remain on it.

The Army GHQ and Sinn Féin outside neither ordered the hunger strike nor greatly approved of it, but once it started they gave all possible support.

STRIKE IN SOLIDARITY

The 1923 hunger strike had begun in Mountjoy with about 400 men involved but it spread quickly to the other camps and jails who went on strike in solidarity, until at one time an estimated 8000 prisoners were refusing to take food. Unfortunately this vast number practically ensured the collapse of the strike because few persons are fitted mentally for the prolonged endurance of a prison hunger strike; it appears to require a special quality that equally brave companions lack. And when thousands of men broke the strike and began to eat again, the Government was able to make good propaganda out of that.

The original ringleaders were removed from Mountjoy to Kilmainham jail where most of them continued until the ending of the strike on November 23, after 41 days and after two had died.

The strike was brought to an end without any concessions whatever being granted, grievous harm had been done to health, but the Government then began to release large numbers of men and women over the Christmas period and the new year, so that those prisoners who remained were consoled by the belief that they had won a moral victory.

Conclusion of extracts from the UTOOM pamphlet 'The Irish Civil War 1922 - 1923', by Frances M. Blake.

HIDDEN CRACKS IN THE H-BLOCKS

(Continued from page 3)

Belfast listening to concerned relatives describe the plight of the prisoners.

In October there was a congressional hearing at which congressmen Elberg and Fish gave a report of their recent investigatory visit to the Six-Counties. Also there was Father Raymond Murray's excellent testimony to more than one hundred congressmen (and to the Philadelphia 'ad hoc'

THERE ARE now six P.O.W.s 'on the blanket' in England. Four in Albany prison, Isle of Wight and two at Wormwood Scrubs, London. The conditions under which the four P.O.W.s are held in Albany get more and more like those of the H-Blocks of Long Kesh. The four Anthony Cunningham, Liam Baker, Robert Cunningham (all of Belfast) and Patrick Guilfoyle (Tipperary) have been on their protest now since 8th October. Speaking literally they are 'on the towel' as no blankets are allowed during the day.

Their day starts with screws hosing out the cells with hot water, whilst the P.O.W.s and their bedding is still inside. The screws then sprinkle disinfectant all around, making that operation into a mock ritual of sprinkling holy water. As the P.O.W.s have been refusing to stop out, the Governor decided to remove their chamber-pots and is giving them a special escort to and from the toilets. As they often have to wait for up to 3 hours for this 'privilege' they have been forced to throw waste material out of the window.

The only furniture in the cells is the 'latest' bed: it consists of concrete-blocks with boards laid on top, all these are removed during the day.

All the P.O.W.s possessions have been removed from their cells. They are not allowed a

SIX P.O.W.s NOW 'ON THE BLANKET' IN ENGLAND

ENGLISH PRISON REPORT, COURTESY OF
AN CUMANN CABHRACH, BIRMINGHAM

watch, radio, cigarettes, family-photographs or books. One day in every 14 they are given a newspaper. Their mail, which is of course censored and restricted to family letters, often arrives late and on occasions not at all. The P.O.W.s are locked up in solitary confinement in the punishment-block for an alleged breach of prison rules. Both P.O.W.s are being held in total isolation from the other Irish political prisoners.

The P.O.W.s continue to be subjected to a degrading strip-search before and after each visit. The 4 'blanket men' are seeking the right of repatriation to Ireland to serve their sentences there.

Other P.O.W.s in Albany are also continuing their protest-action of non-cooperation with the screws. This is a protest which started in April when visiting and other conditions seriously deteriorated.

There are 2 P.O.W.s 'on the blanket' in Wormwood Scrubs, Michael Murray (Dublin) and James Bennett (Belfast). Mick

Murray started his protest on October 13th, against the repressive prison conditions all the Irish political prisoners are held under. At the time he had just completed 2 weeks in solitary confinement in the punishment-block for an alleged breach of prison rules. Both P.O.W.s are being held in total isolation from the other Irish political prisoners.

Since an alleged escape-plot in early October, Patrick Mulryan (Dublin) has been transferred to Long Lartin, and Eddie Byrne (Down) transferred to the prison at Walton, Liverpool, where he is refusing visits because of the visiting conditions. Stephen Blake (Donegal) has recently arrived in the Scrubs from his isolation period in Bristol prison.

John McCluskey (Fermanagh) after much travel from Gartree via Winchester has now also arrived in the Scrubs following

the October Gartree riots and as a result of the same riots Mick Sheehan (Dublin) stopped off here on his way to Parkhurst, Isle of Wight.

For a change all the P.O.W.s in Wakefield are currently not in the punishment-block. Ray McLoughlin (Donegal) decided to end his 'on the blanket' protest on 8th October, because he was beginning to feel severe psychological disorientation, after spending 7 weeks in the conditions of sensory deprivation in the control-unit in F-wing.

Martin Brady (Belfast) was moved to Wakefield following the Gartree riots. He has been promised a hard time by the screws, as they allege he was one of the ring-leaders of the disturbance.

Ronnie McCartney (Belfast) was moved to Winchester prison with John McCluskey (Fermanagh). Because of their protests there concerning conditions they were both immediately placed in the punishment-block. (John McCluskey has since been moved to Wormwood Scrubs, London). Ronnie McCartney continues his protest and refuses to co-operate with the screws. He is at present refusing visits because of restrictions placed on both him and his visitors. As a result of his protest actions Ronnie McCartney has now been placed in a special 'cell', known as 'the strongbox', because it is more like a metal-box than the normal brick and mortar cell.

Ireland Socialist Review Number 3

Includes 1920 Parliamentary Labour Party Commission Report on Ireland with introduction, an extended review of 'Beyond Orange and Green' and Trade Union reports.

Price 30p + 15p p&p (subscriptions £1 for 3 issues). Available from: ISR, 60 Loughborough Rd., London SW9.

Support
the
PoWs

OUT
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Vol 2 no 2 Nov. 1978



Manchester Martyrs: rescue of Fenian leaders
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**TROOPS OUT NOW!
SELF DETERMINATION FOR THE
IRISH PEOPLE AS A WHOLE!**

committee for human rights in Northern Ireland'). He described how the British have tried to "smash" the blanket protest using "torture", and how "the British are prepared to use violations of basic human rights to create conditions suitable for the imposition of a British solution on the Irish people".

At the beginning of November, Jack Anderson, an influential Washington columnist carried a report about the H-Blocks. He wrote "Human rights violations, reported to us by a number of reliable

sources, have put Northern Ireland on an unenviable par with some of the most barbarous regimes of communist dictators or tin-horn Latin American dictators." He, at least, seemed to think Americans should do something about it.

POSITIVE PICTURE

In the Free State despite the consistent publicity work done by Sinn Féin and others, with the regular weekly protests in Dublin, and despite repeated articles (and letters) published in middle class liberal papers like

the 'Irish Times' and 'Hibernia' there has been insufficient significant impact so far.

Despite this relatively negative picture in the 26 counties, the overall picture remains increasingly positive with the hidden cracks in the H-Blocks promising to become wider and more open in the coming weeks and months. For example, the screws recent 'work-to-rule' for £2 per day 'dirt money' was a direct product of the stresses and strains within the crumbling H-Blocks. We have not heard

the last of the screws mercenary demands.

Of one thing we can be sure. The blanket men and their comrades interned-on-demand will certainly not give up. It is on this rock that 'criminalisation' is sure to founder. As Jimmy Drumm said at the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis: "The prisoners will not let us down, we must not let them down."

A massive turn-out at the commemorative protest in Armagh City on Sunday is the next step in keeping up the pressure on Mason and his H-Blocks. Be there!

ANDERSONSTOWN
H-BLOCK
CHRISTMAS
REQUEST
PROGRAMME

A Xmas Request Programme will be held at the "Stalls" Andersonstown Road, Belfast, on Saturday 9th December, for the P.O.W.s on the blanket protest in H-blocks and all Republican prisoners incarcerated in Irish and English gaols.

Requests for records should be handed in before Saturday December 2nd to Sinn Fein Advice Centre, Andersonstown Road, Belfast.

This request programme is organised by the O'Carroll/Tierney Sinn Fein Cumann, Andersonstown.

LEITRIM
FONTENOYS
G.A.C.

AT the recent Annual General Meeting of Leitrim Fontenoy GAC a resolution was unanimously passed condemning the deplorable conditions that exist in H-Block, Long Kesh, and accordingly sympathise with those concerned.

Sympathy

ALL the gang offer their deepest sympathy to Alison, Liam, Deborah, wee All, Catherine, Seamus and all the Logue family on the death of their Cousin Seamus Logue.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

MCALPIN, Perry, H3 Block, Long Kesh. Wishing you all you wish yourself Perry. Lots of love, God Bless you and all your comrades.
From Mr. & Mrs. McKeown and Kieran.

GALLAGHER, Dennis, P.O.W. H4 Block. Happy 21st Birthday Dennis. Hoping your next one is spent in freedom.
From Chuck, Ann, Sean and Katina.

MCCARTNEY, Raymond, 'A' Wing, Crumlin Barracks, Haper 23rd birthday. Raymond, All the best.
From Chuck, Ann, Sean and Katina.

CONNOLLY, John, H4 Block, Long Kesh. Best wishes on your 21st Birthday John.
From Phyllis, Eddie and the kids.

SCULLION, Colum, P.O.W. H3 Block. Best wishes on your 20th birthday Colum. Sorry you can't be with us but maybe you'll be with us on your next.
From Mick and Jock.

SCULLION, Colum, H3 Block. Greetings on your birthday Colum. Wish you were with us but it may not be too long before you're back with us.
From Brenden and Gasper.

HURSON, Martin, H3 Block, Long Kesh. ONE YEAR ON THE BLANKET.

Though prison bars divide us and we are far apart, they have you in their keeping I have you in my heart.
All my love from Bernadette.

O'NEILL, P.J., H-Block, Long Kesh. ONE YEAR ON THE BLANKET. Congratulations P.J. for having the courage and determination to complete one year on the blanket. Your strength is an inspiration to all, God bless you and your comrades.
From your Brothers and Sisters.

IN MEMORIAM

MARLEY, Michael (Fifth Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of dear Son, Michael Marley, Ni Fhanna h-Eirann, 2nd Battalion, Belfast Brigade. Who was murdered by the British army on 24th November, 1973. R.I.P. Mass offered. He was taken without any warning, his going left head full of pain, but though he is gone from among us, in hearts he will always remain.

Sadly missed by his Mother and Father, Brother Tommy, Long Kesh and Margaret.

MARLEY, Michael (Fifth Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of young Brother Michael Marley, Ni Fhanna h-Eirann, who was murdered by the British army, 24th November 1973 in Divis Flats, Mass offered here Long Kesh. This day is remembered and quietly kept, no words are needed we will never forget.
Always remembered by his Brother Tommy and all the other rema P.O.W.s from the Lower Falls in H6 Long Kesh.

MARLEY, Michael (Fifth Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Fergal O'Hanlon Sinn Fein Cumann, Lavey, South Derry. From the Fergal O'Hanlon Sinn Fein Cumann, Lavey, South Derry.

O'NEILL, Kevin E. P.O.W. H-Block. Birthday Greetings Kevin on your 20th and on completing TWO YEARS ON THE BLANKET. No victim is a greater Ireland's friend. Victor will be yours.

Always remembered by his Brother Tommy and all the other rema P.O.W.s from the Lower Falls in H6 Long Kesh.

MARLEY, Michael (Fifth Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Fergal O'Hanlon Sinn Fein Cumann, Lavey, South Derry. From the Fergal O'Hanlon Sinn Fein Cumann, Lavey, South Derry.

Always remembered by his Brother Tommy and all the other rema P.O.W.s from the Lower Falls in H6 Long Kesh.

FOX, Paul (3rd Anniversary). In proud and loving memory of Volunteer P.J. Fox, 2nd Battalion, Oglach na h-Eireann, Belfast Brigade, killed in an explosion 1st December, 1975. He was a brave, fearless soldier of Mot Ireland.

Sadly missed by all his comrades and friends. Remembered always Belfast Brigade Staff and Volunteers.

CRAWFORD, Laura (3rd Anniversary). In proud and cherished memory Volunteer Laura Crawford, 1st Battalion, Belfast Brigade, Cumann na mBan killed in an explosion, 1st December 1975. Her memory will always be inspiration to all her comrades in Cumann na mBan. May she rest in peace.

Mary, Queen of Ireland take her to your heart and grant her rest.

Always remembered by Belfast Brigade Staff and Volunteers, Cumann na mBan.

ONE YEAR ON THE BLANKET

Solidarity Greetings

BOYLE, Dermot, H-Block, Long Kesh. ONE YEAR ON THE BLANKET. We salute you and all the men and women who have refused to wear the garb of the BLANKET. Victory is yours, God Bless.

O'NEILL, P.J., H-Block, Long Kesh. ONE YEAR ON THE BLANKET. The most not those who can inflict the most not those who can endure the most who will attain victory.

KANE, Peter, H-Block, Long Kesh. ONE YEAR ON THE BLANKET. Congratulations on completing one year on the BLANKET. Your suffering will not be in vain. God Bless you and your comrades.

From the O'Neill Family.

MCDOWELL, Mario, H3 Block, Long Kesh. ONE YEAR ON THE BLANKET.

In the H Blocks men and women live in hell, live in hell, Starved and beaten by screws, fifty cells.

They fight the stench and smell To fight for freedom is no crime They are not criminals, they're prisoners of war.

From Bernie, Gail, Michelle, Jackie and Victoria.

MCDOWELL, Mario, P.O.W. Long Kesh. Long Kesh. Congratulations on having completed ONE YEAR ON THE BLANKET.

Let me carry your cross Ireland Lord!

For Ireland weak with tears For the aged man of the clouds brown.

And the child of tender years For the empty homes of golden plains

For the hopes of her future too!

Let me carry your cross Ireland Lord!

For the cause of Roisin Dubh From Catherine, John, Jul Robert, Ryan and Belan and Jessie

Two years on the blank Solidarity Greeting

McGLINCEY, Paul, H-Block, Long Kesh. Congratulations Paul on having completed TWO YEARS ON THE BLANKET.

From your parents and family at home and Brother Sean in Long Kesh and Dominic in Portadown Ireland unfree shall never be peace.

